

A TRIO of PURDEYS

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #254 —

A trio means three, three of most anything. In the fine gun industry, however, it could mean three identical guns, (one additional gun added to a matched pair); but, it could also mean three nearly-identical guns – in three different gauges. Such is the case with this trio of Purdey shotguns – 20, 28 and 410. All three were ordered on the same day, by the same person, in June 1981. It's quite a serious process to order a Purdey, as each is built to the Customer's specifications; and there are a great many specifications to consider when writing the order. Ordering three at one time would have been a really big deal, in both time and money.

Gauge, barrel lengths and stock dimensions are typically the Customer's first considerations – then likely weights and

trigger pulls. These guns were obviously built for walk-up style upland bird hunting; each has 26" barrels and is stocked at 14-1/2" length of pull, 1-1/2" drop at comb and 2-1/2" drop

at heel – pretty standard American production dimensions. In addition, each stock is cast off (offset) 1/8" to the right. The best thing about the dimensions is that they fit me quite well.

The 410 weighs just 5 pounds, 9-1/4 ounces, the 28 only an ounce more at 5 pounds, 10-1/4 ounces and the 20 gauge only seven and 1/2 ounces more, at 6 pounds, 1-3/4 ounces. In my hands these guns feel and point the same.

A "third bite" is a small, square protrusion on the back of the barrels (Bottom Picture); it fits perfectly into a slot in the receiver

From this perspective, the three guns appear identical; they almost are, and have consecutive serial numbers. For these reasons, they are called a trio.



as the gun is closed, and the bottom of the top lever closes tightly over it. Side clips are small wedges on the sides of the receiver that block sideways movement of the barrels when fired. The 20 gauge has both "third bite" and "side clips", likely because it has extra barrels chambered for 3" and 410 gauge have only side clips, likely to match in appearance.

"...it could mean three identical guns..."

The rest of the specifications are important but secondary to the shootability. These guns all feature double triggers, with hinged front, rolled edge trigger guards, rounded actions and ventilated ribs. They have leather covered recoil pads, straight grip stocks – rather than pistol grip, and finally, beavertail forends rather than the more traditional splinter-type. They are certainly an interesting trio of guns, quite possibly unique.

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My Gunroom
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Each gun has its own heavy-duty leather case, for displaying the gun in the gunroom or to protect it during light travel. In addition, each has a heavy canvas cover, to protect the beautiful leather during travel.



The side clips, protruding from both sides of the front of the action, help secure the barrels during firing; all three of the guns have these. In addition, the 20 gauge (above) features a "third bite".